

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2363

C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 3966

NODIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, CD, JO, US

SUBJECT: MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO CHAD

REF: A) STATE 166492, B) STATE 166037

1. IN DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN POSSIBLE "FRIENDS OF CHAD" CONVOCATION, AS WELL AS PROVIDING MILITARY ASSISTANCE, JORDAN MUST CONFRONT PERENNIAL PROBLEM OF NECESSITY TO AVOID OPEN BREACH IN ARAB RANKS. WHILE NO LOVE IS LOST BETWEEN KING HUWWEIN AND QADHAFI, FACT REMAINS THAT JORDAN RECENTLY RE-ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH LIBYA. JORDAN IS ALWAYS HOPEFUL AS WELL FOR RESUMPTION OF PAYMENT BY LIBYA TO JORDAN OF CONSIDERABLE KHARTOUM SUBSIDIES. JORDANIANS MIGHT THEREFORE BE LEERY OF PARTICIPATING IN OPEN FORUM CONVENED TO DISCUSS AID TO CHAD, WITH WHICH IT HAS VIRTUALLY NO PAST CONTACT OR DIPLOMATIC TIES.

2. ON OTHER HAND, JORDAN MIGHT BE WILLING TO JOIN A JOINT EFFORT WITH EGYPT, SAUDI ARABIA, THE SUDAN, AND POSSIBLY MOROCCO IN UNPUBLICIZED PROGRAM OF MILITARY AID TO CHAD, PARTICULARLY IF TRANSFERS WOULD
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BE REPLACED ALL OR IN PART BY U.S. JORDAN'S INTERESTS IN CHAD AND CENTRAL AFRICA ARE CERTAINLY NOT SUCH AS TO WARRANT AMMAN GOING IT ALONE, ALTHOUGH PROSPECT OF CONTAINING OVERT EXPANSIONISM BY QADHAFI MIGHT INDUCE KING HUSSEIN TO COOPERATE WITH LIKE-MINDED ARAB REGIMES IN LIMITED AND SENSITIVELY HANDLED PROGRAM.

3. ANOTHER BASIC PROBLEM IS THAT OF JORDANIAN EQUIPMENT SHORTAGES, PARTICULARLY OF ITEMS OF U.S. ORIGIN. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE, BUT ARE NOT SURE, THAT JORDAN MIGHT BE ABLE TO TRANSFER LIMITED QUANTITIES OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:
BRITISH 25-POUNDER FIELD GUN AND AMMUNITION,
106 MM RECOILLESS RIFLES, PLUS AMMUNITION,
81 MM MORTARS,
3.5 INCH AT ROCKET LAUNCHERS,
M-1 RIFLES, AND PERHAPS SOME CARBINES.
ALTHOUGH JORDAN RECENTLY TRANSFERRED SOME BRITISH-ORIGIN EQUIPMENT (MAINLY ARMORED CARS) TO LEBANON, WE THINK THERE ARE STILL SOME EXCESS SALADINS, SARACENS AND FERRETS. IT IS ALSO LIKELY THAT JORDAN COULD SPARE SOME WELL-WORN, BUT SERVICEABLE FORD TRUCKS, BUT NO U.S.-STYLE 2-1/2 TON TYPE VEHICLES. WEBBING, CLOTHING AND RATIONS MIGHT ALSO BE AVAILABLE (PARA 2C, REFTTEL B). JORDAN WOULD NEED HELP TO MOVE EQUIPMENT.

4. IF DEPARTMENT DESIRES, AMBASSADOR WOULD BE WILLING TO APPROACH KING ON SUBJECT, BUT PRIOR TO DOING SO IT WOULD BE HELPFUL (1) TO TELL HIM OF OUR APPROACH TO AND REACTIONS OF OTHER COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY SAUDI ARABIA, MOROCCO AND EGYPT, AND
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(2) TO GIVE HIM ASSURANCE OF TIMELY U.S. REPLACEMENT OF TRANSFERRED EQUIPMENT.

5. SUGGEST DEPARTMENT REPEAT TO CAIRO, JIDDA, RABAT, NDJAMENA AND ANY OTHER ADDRESSEES AS DESIRED.
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